

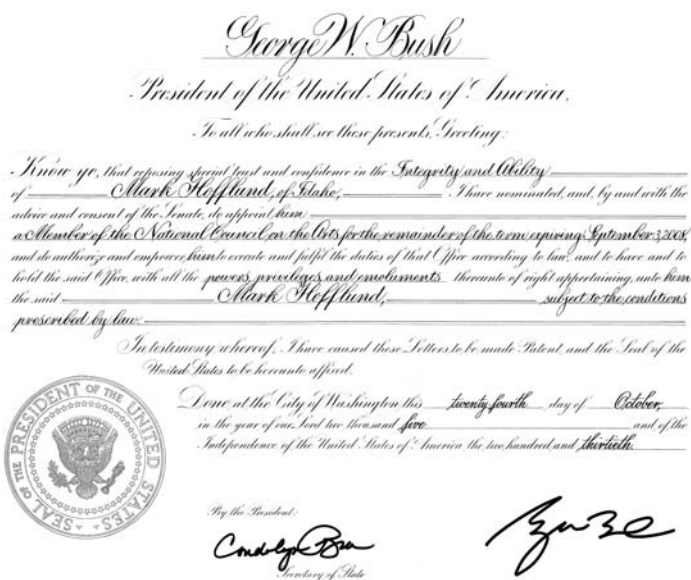
ANATOMY

of an

APPOINTMENT

Every man has his own vocation; talent is the call.

– Emerson



In October 2005, Mark Hofflund, chair of the Idaho Commission on the Arts, as well as managing director of the Idaho Shakespeare Festival for 14 years, was appointed by President Bush to the National Council on the Arts. He is only the second Idahoan to be so honored, the other being Louise McClure, a University of Idaho graduate, spouse of Senator Jim McClure, and key figure in preserving the NEA in 1995. Since artists and arts administrators, and most other Americans for that matter, have an imperfect understanding of the role of the Council and the appointment process, this article undertakes to clarify both.

The National Council on the Arts advises the Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, who also chairs the Council, on agency policies and programs. It reviews and makes recommendations to the Chair on applications for grants, funding guidelines, and leadership initiatives.

The Council was established through the National Arts and Cultural Development Act of 1964, a full year before the federal agency was created by Congressional legislation. Its first members were appointed by President Lyndon Johnson and a few of the noted artists among its early appointments included Marian Anderson, Leonard Bernstein, Agnes de Mille, Richard Diebenkorn, Duke Ellington, Helen Hayes, Charlton Heston, James Earl Jones, Harper Lee, Gregory Peck, I.M. Pei, Sidney Poitier, Richard Rodgers, Rosalind Russell, Beverly Sills, David Smith, John Steinbeck, Isaac Stern, Edward Villella, and Eudora Welty.

The National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965 established the National Endowment for the Arts and provided for 26 citizens to serve as advisors to the agency as members of the National Council on the Arts. Members are nominated by the President and approved by the Senate for six-year, staggered terms. In 1997, Congress enacted legislation that reduced the membership of the Council to 14 and required the appointment of an additional six members of Congress to serve in an *ex officio*, non-voting capacity for two-year terms.

The Presidential appointments, by law, are selected for their widely recognized knowledge of the arts or their expertise or profound interest in the arts. They have records of distinguished service or achieved eminence in the arts and are appointed so as to represent equitably all geographical areas of the country. Congressional members are appointed in the following manner: two by the Speaker of the House, one by the Minority Leader of the House, two by the Majority Leader of the Senate, and one by the Minority Leader of the Senate.

who

Current Council members include: James Ballinger, director of the Phoenix Art Museum; Don Cogman, arts patron and chair of CC Investments, Scottsdale; Mary Costa, former opera singer, Knoxville; Katharine Cramer DeWitt, arts patron, Cincinnati; Makoto Fujimura, contemporary painter, New York; David Gelernter, author, critic, and professor of computer science at Yale; Teresa Lozano Long, arts patron and educator, Austin; Maribeth Walton McGinley, art director and designer, Glendale, CA; Jerry Pinkney artist and book illustrator, Croton-on-Hudson, NY; Deedie Potter Rose, arts patron, Dallas; Gerard Schwarz, music director of the Seattle Symphony; Terry Teachout, drama critic for the *Wall Street Journal*; Dr. Karen Lias Wolff, dean of the University of Michigan School of Music and professor of music education, Ann Arbor.

what

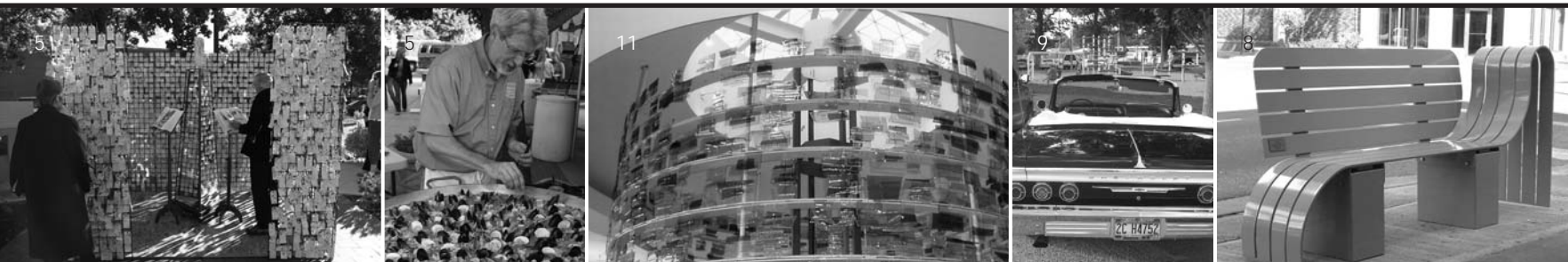
The major areas in which the Council advises the agency and its Chair are:

- Applications for federal grant funds recommended by advisory panels;
- Guidelines outlining funding categories, objectives, and eligibility;
- Leadership initiatives and partnership agreements with other agencies;
- Agency budget levels, allocations, and funding priorities;
- Policy directions involving Congressional legislation and other issues of importance to the arts nationally.

The Council also recommends individuals and organizations to receive the National Medal of Arts, a Presidential award in recognition of outstanding contributions to the arts in America.

when, where

Currently, Council meetings are convened every three days, usually starting Wednesday afternoon and concluding Friday morning, three times a year (March, July, November). Meetings are held at the Nancy Hanks Center/Old Post Office Building in Washington, D.C., and the last day is open to the public. Prior to the public meeting, the Council has a day-long briefing from NEA's 16 department heads who review pending grant applications and the deliberations of the panelists who evaluated them. Agendas are posted on the Web site.



ANATOMY OF AN APPOINTMENT: continued...



Left to right: Senator Larry Craig, Mark Hofflund, Louise and Jim McClure.

why

On being asked how he was selected, Hofflund replies, “It was always a bit of a mystery. [He knew no one on the Council.] The Office of Presidential Personnel called me near the end of March and asked if I would be willing to have an interview and fill out some papers. So I suspected Dana Gioia [NEA Chairman] had been up to something.” (Although the Chair can suggest candidates, obviously the Council cannot consist largely of his or her friends.)

Next Hofflund filled out an online questionnaire. The OPP performed its due diligence, as the human resources arm of the White House. The first of what would become three interviews with three government agencies followed: First, a conversation with an OPP supervisor over the telephone lasting about an hour, covering views and experience. Several weeks then elapsed. Further forms were needed, further questions asked, but generally the process was expected to come to an end. In this case, however, the next call brought a surprise. “Your name came up in the Oval Office this morning,” a young OPP staff member informed Mark. “Congratulations. This is very exciting. We will now be working to advance your nomination.”

Then a three-ring binder of forms to be filled out arrived with a cover memo from Harriet Miers, Counsel to the President. Finger-prints were taken at a facility in Meridian and included with a number of the forms Counsel sent to the FBI. A few weeks later, FBI agent Diane Kisabeth called the candidate to schedule an interview, discussing the completed forms and their relevance to national security – the kind of discussion potential ambassadors might anticipate.

The third interview was in Washington, D.C., where Hofflund had been asked to serve on a peer panel along with nine other experts to review 140 NEA theater and musical theater grant applications. On a long lunch hour, he hurried to the White House for an interview next door in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building with Ann Laughlin, deputy counsel to the President. About to take maternity leave, she had received the FBI report a day earlier and was interested in meeting Hofflund and learning about his work in Idaho. She concluded the interview by saying, “Well, you’re set! The President is pleased to have you.”

A new set of forms, however, along with some of the earlier papers, still had to migrate to the Senate, which was in recess, to confirm the

nomination through the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP). Committee Chair Senator Mike Enzi is persuaded that the Committee should always meet to approve nominations. But the November meeting of the Council was scarcely two months away, and Hurricane Katrina and the confirmation of John Roberts to the Supreme Court dominated the Senate’s immediate priorities. Legislative aide Eric Rasmussen in Senator Crapo’s office became Hofflund’s advocate. He urged his administrative colleagues up the line, especially in Senator Enzi’s office, to assist in expediting the nomination.

‘tis a consummation dearly to be wished

Idaho newspapers had divulged the news prominently, and Rasmussen would have help in getting Hofflund’s nomination onto the Committee’s agenda. The Ranking Member on the Committee is Senator Edward Kennedy. His friend, Bethine Church, wrote saying, “Mark has been a major force in the arts in Idaho...and has made a major contribution both in Idaho and the nation.” She quoted Dana Gioia’s recommendation, “All political considerations were secondary to his artistic and organizational qualifications.” Within a few days, Kennedy replied: “It is good to have your strong endorsement and I expect that Mr. Hofflund will be approved by the Senate sometime after we return from the August recess. His commitment to the arts, and especially to the study and advancement of works by Shakespeare, seems to highly qualify him for the appointment.”

In early September, Governor Dirk Kempthorne wrote his former colleague Senator Kennedy, saying in part, “I hope you will make it an early priority to sustain the appointment when the HELP committee convenes this fall....” The Governor also wrote his colleague from Wyoming, Senator Enzi, adding “... he has been a phenomenal advocate for the arts in the state of Idaho.”

On October 13, Rasmussen reported that the Committee meeting had been set for October 18. Hofflund’s name had floated to the top of the 10 nominations being considered by HELP, just beneath the 2005 Spending Reconciliation Bill and the National Bio-Defense Act of 2005.

On October 18, following the HELP meeting, Senators Mike Crapo and Larry Craig issued a joint press release praising Hofflund’s confirmation to the National Council on the Arts to fulfill the remainder of a six-year term that expires in September 2008. Crapo declared, “His confirmation... is significant and shows a record of accomplishment

for his work in Idaho and I congratulate him on his success.” Craig said, “...[he] is a friend and an extremely talented individual who brings a business-minded approach along with his passion for the arts to the National Council. He’s well known ... for his creativity in finding partners and funding high quality programs for people in rural as well as urban communities. Much like his predecessor, Louise McClure, Mark truly understands the positive impact the arts and humanities have on the economy of this nation, and he’s out to make it even better.” Executive director of the Idaho Commission on the Arts Dan Harpole added, “Not only is this significant for the arts in Idaho, but many state arts agency leaders are pleased by this nomination because it has been years since the chair of such an agency has been on the Council.”

The nomination then proceeded to the full Senate, where it was approved. By now, the NEA was communicating daily with Mark because the November meeting loomed ever nearer. He had begun reviewing meeting materials, along with one-paragraph summaries of several hundred grants under consideration. He and his wife Lynn had airline tickets for Washington, D.C. Normally it can take a month for a nomination to travel from the Senate to the President’s desk. This one moved like a peregrine. Within days, the State Department carried it to the President for his signature.

On November 4, Mark Hofflund was administered the oath of office by Attorney General Alberto Gonzales during the public session in the presence of Senator Craig and former Senator Jim and Louise McClure. A venerable Council member was heard to quip pleasantly, “My Senator didn’t come for *mys* swearing-in.”

The newest and one of the younger members of the Council, Hofflund was in time for the November meeting where members reviewed nearly 800 “Access to Artistic Excellence” grants and recommended distribution of \$20 million in federal arts money.

Hofflund is the only Council member from the Rocky Mountain States, and only the second from the Northwest. Commenting on regional representation, he says, “Geographical diversity is part of the mandate, but getting the right person is more important than getting a regionalist. Coming from a small community, and serving on a small public body, it is especially important to protect the *public* interest – you can’t be seen as a person who only accomplishes things for theater or Boise, for instance. I am conscious of people who have special interests,” he adds, “and I am one of them. But the greater public good may have nothing to do with my known interests. I try to practice that view at the city and state level, and in theory I can do so at the national level. There’s a natural empathy for the least advantaged, and I suspect Council members are aware that I may know something which could be beneficial in that area. I hope I can champion Wyoming, Montana, South Dakota, as well as New York and California. The NEA is known to have a thorough and rigorous process for distributing federal support to programs of public value throughout the country. Chair Gioia is passionate about serving the whole country, and the agency is staffed with a team of brilliant and devoted experts. This will be a feast of knowledge.” With him, all Idaho will be at the table. Please pass the potatoes.

• CC

ARTS THRIVING

IN IDAHO

Art does not reproduce the visible; rather, it makes visible

– Paul Klee

Mel Shelton, professor, composer, and longtime director of bands at Boise State University once said, “Music is a picture painted on a background of silence. It is unique in that it allows our brain to see with our ears and hear with our hearts.” Mel’s observation can well be applied to all artistic endeavor. Art opens one sense to the perceptivity of another – a transformative experience that touches the soul. Those who work in our communities revealing their creativity and encouraging the creative expression of others contribute to our society and lives in ways for which credit is rarely or adequately given.

Recently, arts in Idaho received a dramatic boost of national recognition. In September, Dan Harpole, executive director of the Idaho Commission on the Arts, was named board president of the National Assembly of States Arts Agencies. Last October, Mark Hofflund, managing director of the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, was nominated by President Bush and approved by the United States Senate to serve on the National Council on the Arts, the advisory body of the National Endowment for the Arts. These honors are proof that arts in Idaho are thriving and being recognized elsewhere.

Some Idaho artists have become household names here and abroad – consider Ernest Hemingway, Vardis Fisher, and Ezra Pound. Others are just as well-known to the fellow Idahoans with whom they live and work. Although by no means an exhaustive list, Idahoans know of visual artists Ward Hooper and Hugh Mossman and photographers Mark Lisk and Steve Bly in Boise; Will Leaton in Kamiah, Mary Bakker in Whitebird, Sam Silverhawk in Clark Fork, Carl Funseth in Oldtown, Kathrine



Senator Crapo, center, with Boy Scouts.



Mark Lisk photo.

Haynes in Bonners Ferry, Gary Stone and Judie Reeder in Twin Falls, David Stoecklein in Challis, John Easton in Grangeville, Jerry Ginn in Stites, musicians Mickey and the Motor Cars, “Cowboy Rudy” Gonzales and Rosalie Sorrels, and writers Pat McManus and Marilynne Robinson. Be it Marilyn Hansen with her wild horses or Fred Ochi with his red barns, Idaho artists bring our imagination and memories to life. In nearly any community, small town or large, residents know their local artists and feel enriched by their presence and creativity.

Whether in music, dance, writing or the myriad visual arts, the act of creation connects us to a deeper part of ourselves. We tend to be inundated with busy schedules and find little time to reach this place of inner strength and peace, but art – either in doing or appreciating – helps us get there. This personal experience strikes a chord of community and understanding between people. A song hauntingly reminiscent of someone long ago, a painting that looks like a place you remember as a child; or a quilt, the craft, color and pattern of which brings to mind a kindly grandmother – these experiences transform mere elements to a realm of memory, imagination, and feeling that leaves us nourished and reinvigorated.

I’m enthusiastic about the leadership and direction of Idaho arts. The many forms of artistic expression that abound in Idaho make our state and our communities healthier and stronger, and I look forward to working with the Idaho Commission on the Arts to further grow arts in Idaho!

• Mike Crapo, U.S. Senator

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



BEEN NEARBY, DONE SOMETHING SIMILAR.

— George Carlin

Last September, Dan Harpole, executive director of the Idaho Commission on the Arts, was elected president of the board of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA). That agency has a contractual relationship with the NEA, representing and serving the nation's state arts agencies. The significance of the selection prompted the following questions.

Tell us a bit about your earlier involvement with NASAA.

I was appointed to the NASAA board in July 2000, when I was chair of the Washington State Arts Commission. I had been to one meeting before being chosen as the director of the Idaho Commission on the Arts. At my first meeting with commissioners in Idaho, they were unanimous in asking that I stay on with NASAA in order to represent Idaho. Two years ago, I was selected for the executive committee [five members] of the NASAA board.

How were you selected?

The NASAA board creates a nominating committee, interviews prospective candidates, calls every state director, and members of the state councils. In fact, often the executive committee names a director from that committee. Finally, the nominating committee goes to the board with the suggested name for the new president. In turn, the motion of the committee, supported by the board, is taken to the membership.

Was there any connection between hosting the annual NASAA conference last September and this commitment?

Not really. I was asked in late July if I would accept the position. I was, however, confirmed by a voice vote at the Egyptian Theatre at the close of the NASAA conference meeting.

What was the view of the ICA executive committee with regard to this added responsibility?

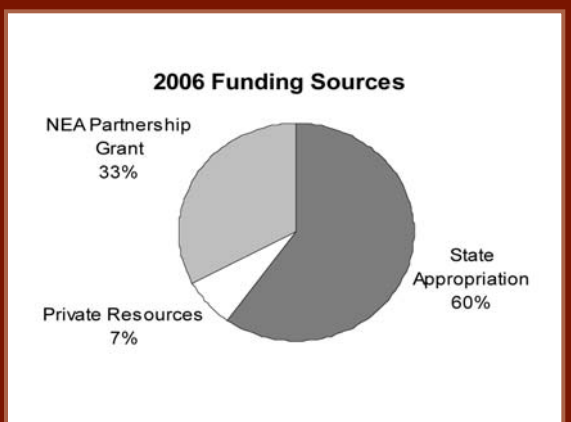
They completely supported my taking the position if it were offered. They expressed some concern about the time required. However, my term on the WESTAF board was ending, and I withdrew my name as a candidate for reelection. Of course, I asked the staff as well.

How much time will it take away from the Commission?

It will consume about four more days than my obligations to WESTAF. Some of our work is handled with conference calls.

What benefits might Idaho derive from your two-year term?

There will be key interactions with the chair of the NEA and an extraordinary opportunity to assist in shaping the NEA's direction and strategies regarding the state agencies. Part of that relationship involves the NEA budget, its basic and incremental grants, and the how they affect smaller states with smaller budgets. Other opportunities include expanded connections to NEA staff, awareness of best practices in other sections of the country, insights into priorities for the NEA and NASAA, the role NASAA can play in the evolution of the next generation of state arts leadership, policy issues coming out of conferences, and recognition of new prospects for Idaho arts organizations and artists.



COMMISSIONERS

Jeanne Anderson, Driggs

Margo Aragon, Lewiston

John Bennett, Kooskia

Cherie Buckner-Webb, Boise

Delores Fery, Boise

Laurel Hall, Idaho Falls

Vince Hannity, Boise

Pat Harder, Twin Falls

Mark Hofflund, Boise

Harry Lawless, Boise

Denise Simone, Hailey

Nancy Sue Wallace, Hayden Lake

Sean Wilson, Moscow

AT LARGE APPOINTMENTS

Andrea Graham, Pocatello

Kitty Gurnsey, Boise

Susan Jacklin, Post Falls

Sally Graves Machlis, Moscow

Louise McClure, Boise



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

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Cort Conley, Director, Literature

Maria Estrada, Office Manager

Maria Carmen Gambliel, Director, Folk Arts

Delta James, Director,

Community Development

Renae Heinsohn, Fiscal Specialist

Melanie Palmer, Grants Specialist

Ruth Piispanen, Director, Arts Education

Barbara Robinson, Director, Artist Services

Anjuli Waybright, Administrative Assistant

Britney Whiting, Program Assistant

NEWSLETTER DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Green House Creative

WHAT THE ARTS

OFFER IS SPACE,
a certain breathing room for the spirit.

– John Updike

NASAA ANNUAL MEETING 2005

During the first week of September 2005, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies held its annual meeting in Boise – the largest arts-related event in the history of Idaho. The theme, *Shaping Cultural Landscapes*, brought together state arts agency staff, volunteer leaders and colleagues, commissioners and politicians to examine innovative approaches to the stewardship of cultural resources and to explore the application of change management in the public sector. As host, the Idaho Commission on the Arts regarded the six-day event, among other opportunities, as one to develop communication tactics that help opinion leaders recognize and support our work in the arts.



First Lady Laura Bush video-taped a welcome message, and Governor Dirk Kempthorne and Boise Mayor Dave Bieter offered welcome remarks as well. Dana Gioia, Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the NEA, introduced former national poet laureate Robert Hass, who gave an evening reading at the Egyptian Theatre. Presenters during the meeting included folklorist Hal Cannon, cowboy poet Waddie Mitchell, and faculty director of the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, Mark Moore. Workshops ranged from “Public Dollars in the Changing Landscape” to “Excellence and Innovation in State Agencies.”

Subsequent evaluation data for the conference collected from participants and analyzed by NASAA rated the Boise meeting as “the best in the last eight years” – a 4.35 on a 5-point scale. Chair Dana Gioia wrote, in part, “Congratulations on hosting a flawless NASAA conference in what is fast becoming one of my favorite places to visit, Boise. Your pride in your own cultural landscape is apparent – and infectious.” Dorothy McSweeney, chair of the D. C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, wrote, “Thanks and our greatest admiration for a superb conference – so well planned and run and a brilliant showcase for Boise.” Altogether, the economic impact on the local economy exceeded \$300,000.

For those who could not attend, perhaps these images can convey a sense of the event.

CONFERENCE '05

4 9 ° I a t i t u d e s 4 2 °

RELIABLE

DISABLED and WILLING



The Americans with Disabilities Act turns 16 this year. But how much has really changed when it comes to hiring people with mental and physical challenges?

Randy Hullender describes himself as “slow.” For the past two years, the personable 40-year-old has loaded trucks, handled bulky pallets, and stacked boxes at Habitat International, a major manufacturer of indoor-outdoor rug and golf products. Despite his experience at another carpet company through a state program for people with developmental disabilities, this is Hullender’s first full-time job. “It makes me feel great,” he says, “to be able to work among friends and earn a real living.” Working with special-needs employees can be challenging, especially when they get “sidetracked,” admits Habitat team plant coordinator Connie Presnell.

But the payoff is worth it. “Randy is here every day regardless of how he feels,” she says. “He’s consistent. He’s always smiling and in a good mood.” Presnell says Hullender always gives his best effort, “and that’s more than I can say for a lot of able-bodied people.”

An estimated 54 million Americans – a full 20 percent of the population – live with disabilities, according to the National Organization on Disability (NOD), which draws support from high-profile advocates like the late Christopher Reeve, CSI actor Robert David Hall, who lost both legs in a 1978 highway accident, and former director of homeland security Tom Ridge, who has a hearing disability as a result of his military service.

Almost 90 percent of people with disabilities were not born with them.

Like Reeve, Hall, and Ridge, almost 90 percent of people with disabilities were not born with them. According to the Brain Injury Association of America, 1.5 million people sustain traumatic brain damage each year. Someone in the United States has a stroke every 45 seconds. Car accidents, war-related injuries, and loss of mobility as the result of aging jack up the numbers even more. “That’s what distinguishes the disability community from other minorities,” says Michael R. Deland, NOD president and chairman, who sustained a spinal cord injury while playing football in the Navy. “This is a group that anyone can join in an instant.”

Despite celebrity marketing campaigns, improved access, and a decline in blatant discrimination, the employment numbers have hardly budged since the 1990 signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. In last year’s annual NOD-Harris Survey, only 35 percent of people with disabilities reported that they were employed, compared with 78 percent of those without disabilities. Three times as many live in poverty.

Fifteen years after the ADA began breaking down physical barriers, advocates contend that the greatest obstacle to employment is no longer a lack of accessible doors, workstations, and

restrooms, but the misguided notion that people with disabilities are inferior to their able-bodied counterparts. “There’s still this attitude that people with disabilities are underperformers, that they’re unreliable, that the accommodations are expensive, and that they won’t pull their weight, which will cause other people to work harder. That couldn’t be farther from the truth,” says Gary Feemster, director of operations for Diversity Services, a New York employment agency known for placing a high number of workers who have disabilities. “Because of all the struggles that disabled workers have been through, all of the hurdles they’ve had to jump, by the time they find a job, they tend to be extremely loyal workers. And their retention rate is very high.”

At any given time, more than 40 percent of the workers Feemster’s company places have disabilities. Workers are placed in jobs ranging from information technology to legal services to Web design. “We staffed for a reality TV show last week,” he says. “And we’ve even received an order for a nuclear engineer. So there are major corporations, I think, that are becoming more aware that you can’t just talk about it. And,” he adds, “you don’t have to be overly sensitive. We all have similar interests. We all care about family, our faith, our hobbies. When people realize we’re more the same than we are different and focus on ability, not disability, then that starts to help bridge the gap.”

You’re not taking more of a risk hiring someone in a wheelchair than someone who’s able-bodied.

Some companies are beginning to recruit people with disabilities in an effort to meet their corporate diversity goals. A few, like Habitat International, give priority to disabled job candidates. Booz Allen Hamilton, a global management and technology-consulting firm based in McLean, Virginia, is frequently recognized for hiring special-needs employees. So is LaSalle



Bank in Chicago, which partners with 18 social service agencies that help create jobs for disabled workers. Earlier this year, *Careers and the Disabled* magazine ranked AT&T twenty-first among its list of the nation’s top employers for people with disabilities. Employees with special challenges work in customer care, operator services, and communication technology. “Our goals for hiring anybody are to hire the best-qualified individual,” says Elizabeth Dixon, assistant director of corporate diversity at AT&T. “Working with people with disabilities has been part of our culture since the days of Alexander Graham Bell, who was not looking to invent the telephone when he did. He was looking to facilitate communication for people who were deaf.”

A 20-year-old worker has a 1 in 3 chance of becoming disabled before retirement age.

Dixon, who started at AT&T as a stock-and-bond correspondent 28 years ago, relies on adaptive computer software and a guide dog. She is legally blind. “When my job duties changed and there was going to be some difficulty in doing the job, they got the whole committee together and said, ‘Well, let’s figure out how... she can do the job.’”

UnumProvident, the country’s largest disability insurance provider and seventeenth on the *Careers* list, goes to great lengths to help employees return to work – or remain on the job – after a disability-related absence. Full-time disability management consultants such as Judith Barron-Songy offer solutions ranging from foot rests and magnified computer screens to hydraulic sit-and-stand workstations for workers who have undergone spinal surgery. The cost of such adjustments pales compared with the payoff for “helping them be productive and meeting their personal, financial, and work goals,” Barron-Songy says. “[Human resources managers] should get past looking at the ‘cover’ of a person. You’re not taking more of a risk hiring someone in a wheelchair than someone who’s able-bodied.”

There are other, less obvious, reasons to hire people with disabilities, say disability-hiring proponents. It boosts local economies by fostering productive citizens who have money to spend. It reduces dependency on government subsidies and eases taxpayer burden. It lets businesses tap into the growing market of buyers with disabilities, who, according to NOD, represent \$225 billion in annual consumer spending.

Beyond the practical reasons lie those less tangible. Plainly put, it feels good to give people who face obstacles a chance to prove they can not only overcome, but also thrive. Paul Brinkmann, a disability benefits specialist at UnumProvident, was born with a hearing impairment. He reads lips and wears dual headphones to communicate with customers. As he puts it, “My motto is: I have a disability. My disability doesn’t have me.”

• Nancy Henderson Wurst
Ms. Wurst is the author of *Able! How one company’s disabled workforce became the key to extraordinary success* (Benbella Books, 2005).

SHATTERING STEREOTYPES

It’s been 60 years since President Harry Truman and Congress designated the first week of October as National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week. In 1988, Congress expanded the program, gave it a new name – National Disability Employment Awareness Month – and encouraged business owners to host people with disabilities in an attempt to better understand the realities of hiring them. Despite such efforts, myths still exist.

MYTH: *Employees with disabilities can’t measure up.*
FACT: National studies actually show equal or higher performance ratings. The fallacy stems from a “lack of understanding about what people with disabilities can meaningfully contribute to the workforce,” says Michael R. Deland, chairman and president of the National Organization on Disability. “There’s a feeling that if you’re in a wheelchair or you’re blind or you’re deaf, that you cannot be a comparable employee to an able-bodied person. In reality, the polling and the numbers show that when people with disabilities get jobs, they are uniformly the most loyal of workers because they’re delighted to have the opportunity to work. They’re the ones with the fewest sick-leave days and the fewest absences from the job.”

MYTH: *The accommodations will cost too much.*
FACT: In a 2003 Rutgers University survey of employers, 75 percent of the respondents who had hired someone with a disability said that no workplace changes were needed. When an accommodation was necessary, the average cost was \$500 or less. Small-business tax credits often cover most, if not all, of the expense.

MYTH: *People with disabilities would rather stay home and collect federal SSI (Supplemental Security Income) benefits.*
FACT: Two-thirds of unemployed, disabled participants in the 2004 NOD-Harris Survey of Americans with Disabilities said they would rather be working.

• In **Idaho**, the **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation** strives to place Idahoans with disabilities into the workforce by securing and maintaining productive employment. The IDVR also offers an array of services to assist businesses and professional organizations in employing individuals with disabilities. It has 36 field offices located across the state. www.vr.idaho.gov, 208/327-7411 or 1-800/856-2720.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



SITTIN’

ON MY YA YA,
waitin’ for my ya ya...



Art You Can Sit Upon

As I stroll toward the new Cultural District of downtown Idaho Falls, the Canada geese, in up to their ankles, line the edge of the Snake River. I notice a wine shop and a restaurant or two, new since last I visited. But there is something else – the pace seems to be better suited to the walker, inviting me to shop, to spend some time here, to rest at any corner, “to recline on the backs of two white geese, to lean against a trout, to sit on a giant skateboard, or to cool my heels in the Snake River...without getting wet,” as the freshly printed *Art You Can Sit On* brochure reports to those interested in a walking tour of the town.

During the Idaho Commission on the Arts 2004 regional arts conference in Idaho Falls, civic artist Jack Mackie, in his luncheon keynote, spoke of the ability of public artworks to further community goals. His remarks sparked the Idaho Falls Historic Downtown Foundation, the Idaho Falls Arts Council, and the City of Idaho Falls Park and Recreation Department to collectively discuss the need for downtown public seating. They invited artists to create functional public artworks. If done well, the sculptural seating would provide pedestrians a resting place, but could even be an artistic attraction that would bring visitors to the area.

The project partners soon developed a request for proposals, asking local and regional artists to submit ideas that, within a \$3,000 design and production budget, would provide creative benches. Size, maintenance, safety requirements, and a reflection of the local character were specified. Fifty-three artists submitted 159 proposed designs. Individuals, businesses, and granting agencies raised \$57,000 (including \$8,600 in a Public Art & Cultural Facilities grant from the Idaho Commission on the Arts) to commission 19 distinctly artistic benches – each with a small plaque recognizing its sponsors – and each one now contributes to an interesting, relaxing experience for pedestrians in Idaho Falls.

Occasionally, placing artworks in public spaces can be risky. Since the Idaho Falls benches were installed, one has been vandalized and repaired; another favorite (a wood-inlaid imitation piano) was stolen. A reward has been offered for its return – no questions asked. If you wish to know more about *Art You Can Sit On*, contact the Idaho Falls Arts Council at 208/522-0471 or ifac@idahofallsarts.org.



Benches designed by various artists, Idaho Falls.



Just SCRATCHING

THE SURFACE

Abbu, Abdallah, Abdi, Abdul, Abdulahi, Abdulla, Abdulrahim. Open the pages of the Boise telephone directory and you will see the city's ever-changing cultural contours, as the area becomes home to people from around the world.

– Laura Marcus, “Refugee and Immigrant Traditional Arts in Idaho”

Designed to discover and document new artists, works of art, and cultural traditions in Idaho, the Idaho Artistic and Cultural Traditions (I ACT) project first focused on the Treasure Valley. Survey findings will support cultural maintenance through apprenticeship awards and will foster economic development for artists in cultural, ethnic, and occupational communities. A broader, intangible benefit to communities statewide includes an enhanced awareness of the contributions of diverse artists to the quality of life and economy. Additionally, I ACT findings will inform the development of heritage tourism strategies in Idaho.

Folklorists Laura Marcus and Christina Barr were retained to survey the Treasure Valley. Marcus focused on immigrant and refugee traditional artists; Barr concentrated on other communities. She was assisted by community scholars Wendy Downs, Guisela Bahruth, Krista Oberlindacher-Lloyd, and by BSU intern Amelia Berg. Nearly 150 artists were contacted. Quotes from the notes made by fieldworkers provide a sense of the survey.

Understanding the cultural landscape

As part of the I ACT team, I was assigned the task of conducting fieldwork specifically with new and established refugee and immigrant communities, and maintaining contact with the social service agencies that serve them. Ultimately, this project will update the FTAP Director's understanding of the region's cultural landscape, thereby facilitating better outreach to traditional artists and communities and allowing for more representative and inclusive programming.

– Laura Marcus

First steps

Engaging in this project without previous experience was, undoubtedly, a cause for much anxiety, but also anticipation. Understanding what are the folk arts, though superficially, the importance of traditions, and their impact on culture provided the initial impulse for this adventure. Lacking professional equipment and experience in field documentation were only two of my problems. Fortunately, Maria Carmen was there to help me locate contacts, solve photographic problems, interview several people at once, or focus the conversation.

– Guisela Bahruth

One interview led to another

Interviewing people for doing what they love to do is easy. I arrange for a meeting; I go to them or they come to see me; I turn on the tape recorder...and away they go! It is like releasing a dam, or taking an apple out of the bottom of the pile – everything comes tumbling out. My interest in interviewing people about their musical heritage and cultures began when I learned several colleagues were musicians, and even my daughter's Spanish teacher was in the Basque jam group I listened to at “First Thursday.” One interview led to another and then to another.

– Krista Oberlindacher-Lloyd

Hard at work on a report

I am eager to have you see my report because I am quite pleased with most of my photographs, and because I want to be sure my interviews have the right content. I start out with family history: where they were born, where their parents were born, how long they have been in the community. Since most of them are at least third generation (in the ranch life) they learned [art forms] from their families. Even the silversmiths learned such rudiments because at the turn of the century people needed to know how to repair their own equipment and it simply evolved. I explored the process with some more than with others; with some [it was more] about goals or projects they would like to try eventually.

– Wendy Downs

Thanks must be given to many people in the Valley, too many to name. We interviewed low-riders, poets, musicians, singers, fiber artists, dancers, gardeners, calligraphers, ranchers, cowboys and horse gear-makers, silversmiths, traditional cooks. With a renewed sense of identity and appreciation for our neighbors and for the place where we live, more interviews will follow.

I ACT was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Idaho Commission on the Arts.

- Maria Carmen Gambliel, Folk & Traditional Arts Director



Photos from top to bottom:

- Frankie and Helen Dougal, horsehair braiders. Wendy Downs photo.
- Chris Ansotegui and Alberto Beresiartua, Basque traditional cooks at Epi's Restaurant. M. Eridiina photo.
- Cornelio Totoucaguena working in his garden. Chris Tria Barr photo.
- Chevrolet low-rider, property of David Moiza, Nampa. Guisela Bahruth photo.
- Ali Outadi, Iranian bagmaker and upholstery artist, and his children Maryam, Abbas, and Omid. MC Gambliel photo.
- Musadim Abdulaev and Osman Iskandarov, Meshkhetian Turks, dancing at Municipal Park. MC Gambliel photo.

Let such

TEACH OTHERS

WHO THEMSELVES EXCEL

– Alexander Pope



Kendrick High School principal Jeff Cirka says, "Peggy not only does a superb job of teaching art and inspiring her students, she also gives of herself, professionally and personally, to make Kendrick High School *and* her community better."

IDAHO TEACHING STAR

Peggy Fiske, art teacher in Kendrick, Idaho, was named one of fifty educators nationwide to receive the American Star of Teaching Award from the U. S. Department of Education.

Teachers across all grades and disciplines were honored last fall as American Stars of Teaching. This national recognition is part of the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher to Teacher Initiative, which includes workshops for teachers, roundtables for teachers and principals, E-mail updates, and online professional development. American Star teachers, according to Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, are "representative of the country's many exemplary educators who are using innovative strategies to close the achievement gap and change the course of student lives."

In the states of Idaho, Washington, and New Hampshire, the 2005 American Stars of Teaching are arts educators. Peggy Fiske, the visual arts specialist at Kendrick Junior-Senior High School, was recognized for enriching arts learning as a part of the district's curriculum by using after-school and summer arts programs, as well as arts projects for local children and youth in her community. Ms. Fiske also serves as an officer for the Idaho chapter of the National Art Education Association.

Doug Herbert, special assistant for teacher quality and arts education at the U. S. Department of Education, presented the American Star award to Peggy Fiske. The surprise announcement was made during an afternoon assembly attended by teachers, staff, and all 167 students at Kendrick Junior-Senior High. "For your contributions to Kendrick Junior-Senior High

School, and to your community and your state, and for the many ways in which you inspire students to be not only accomplished artists but successful students," Herbert told Fiske, "I am pleased to present you with this certificate."

Following cheers of students and faculty, Fiske accepted congratulations and reflected upon the meaning of the award: "Other than being honored like this, I don't feel superior to any other teacher," she said. "I do hope it promotes recognition of how influential teaching of the arts can be."

A committee of former teachers convened at the U.S. Department of Education to pick the 50 winners from over 2,000 nominations. Herbert said the awards should not be construed as singling out the best teachers, rather they are presented to teachers who represent the many qualities found in all good teachers.

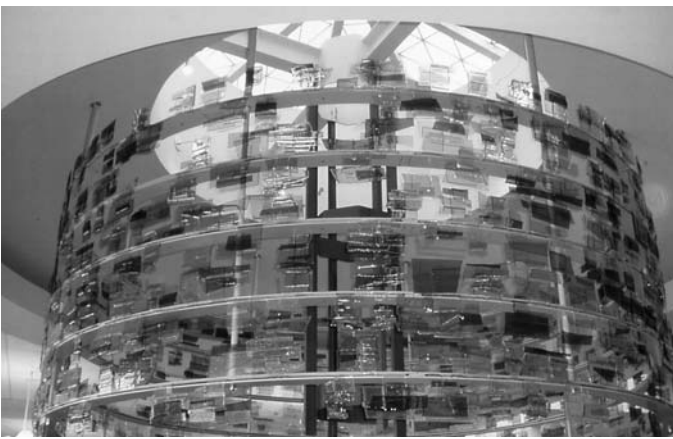
For more information on American Stars of Teaching: www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/american-stars.html

- Ruth Piispanen, Arts in Education Director

BEATS DOWN

AND CRUSHES THE SOUL,
and the arts remind you that you have one.

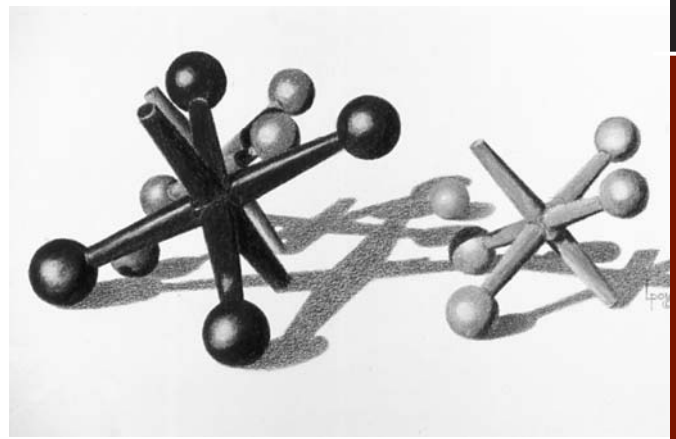
– Stella Adler



Derix Art Glass, aggregate steel and glass, 13' dia.



Bruce Beasley, *Ally II*, cast bronze, 108 x 52 x 33d".



Linda Pound, *Odd Ball*, colored pencil, 6 x 11".

QUICKFUND\$ GRANTS ROUND 1 & 2

BELLVUE

\$970 to **Craters of the Moon Natural History Association** and Tom Blanchard to support an exhibition, "The Flows: Photography and Poetry of the Great Rift Volcanic Zone."

BOISE

\$1,000 to **Boise Art Museum** for transportation costs of a large-scale bronze sculpture for permanent collection.

\$980 to **Boise Contemporary Theater** for building a recording booth where community residents can express personal views that may be used in a production.

\$960 to **Kay Braden** to work with inmates at the South Boise Women's Correction Center doing dance instruction.

\$980 to **Capital City Development Corporation** for support of the Collaborations Project, a pilot performing arts program in the fall 2005.

\$288 to **Michael FitzGerald** to attend workshops at the Fishtrap Summer Conference.

\$980 to **Alvin Greenberg** to partake in a three-week writing residency at Chateau de Lavigny in Switzerland.

\$970 to **Janet Holmes** to partake in a three-week writing residency at Chateau de Lavigny in Switzerland.

\$240 to **Idaho Botanical Garden** for a workshop with Tom Bennick on making handmade paper.

\$495 to **Julie Morrison** to attend a workshop at the Eric Jensen Conference.

\$980 to **Aage Nielsen** for attendance and performance at the World Bass Clarinet Conference in Rotterdam.

\$1,000 to **Amy Westover** to fabricate mural artwork with the Derix Art Glass consultants in Germany.

\$960 to **William Howard Taft Elementary** for an after-school clay program for children with learning disabilities.

BUHL

\$960 to **Jaffe Zinn** to produce a short, 16-mm. film.

CALDWELL

\$361 to **Jan Boles** to frame, crate, and ship photographs to be displayed at the Maryhill Museum in Washington State.

CHALLIS

\$485 to **Claudia Whitten** to attend a seven-day workshop on kiln-formed glass.

EAGLE

\$433 to **Kelli Brown** to attend Ririe-Woodbury dance workshop.

GRANGEVILLE

\$869 to **The Kids Klub** to support a beadwork residency at youth camp and an exhibition of participant's work.

HAILEY

\$960 to **Johanna Marvel** to support touring with a collaborative theater performance.

IDAHO FALLS

\$960 to **Dava Dahlgran** for framing art for a gallery exhibition in Idaho Falls.

INDIAN VALLEY

\$960 to **John Hayes** to make a professional recording of an original score for the silent film, *Back to God's Country*, starring Nell Shipman.

IONA

\$480 to **Teresa Clark** to attend the National Storytelling Network Conference.

MOSCOW

\$941 to **U of I/Center for Dance** for reconstruction of a choreographic work being prepared for preservation.

NAMPA

\$960 to **Gregory Bayne** to complete a feature-length screenplay based on the short film, *Wicker Men*.

\$890 to **Hispanic Cultural Center of Idaho** to sponsor a workshop for Mexican folk dance directors and instructors.

PINEHURST

\$1,000 to **Lynn Maciosek** to support Students Making Art program.

SALMON

\$432 to **Cary Schwarz** to attend a scroll design class for leather tooling taught by Ron Smith at the National Cowboy Museum in Oklahoma.

SANDPOINT

\$480 to **Ann Clizer** to attend the Writers Conference in Port Townsend, WA.

SHOSHONE

\$872 to **Shoshone School District #312** to support a drama camp for Lincoln County students.

STITES

\$960 to **Chris Hunter** to work with master rawhider Pidge Ash, learning how to make rawhide horse gear.

WILDER

\$970 to **Wilder School District #133** to offer sewing and quilting classes in the community.

DEADLINES

*Nothing happens, and nothing happens,
and then everything happens.*

–Fay Weldon



*Visit our Web site for gallery schedules, opportunities,
and calendar events. www.arts.idaho.gov.*

DEADLINES

QuickFunds.....March 7, 2006

Arts Education

ArtsPowered Learning.....February 24, 2006

Creative Alternatives for Youth.....February 24, 2006

Arts Ed Roster.....June 5, 2006

Governor's Awards in the Arts

Nomination Deadline.....March 17, 2006

Nomination forms www.arts.idaho.gov

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